

The story of Ellsworth has a unique history in that it is a culmination of three settlements: that of Lakins's Grove, 1856-1876; the settlement of Callanan 1877-1880; and the building of the town of Ellsworth, starting in 1880.

LAKIN'S GROVE

Lakin's Grove settlement was built along the early Indian trails and early emigrant trails in the southeast part of Hamilton County. It was never platted, but grew for about 20 years.

CALLANAN

Callanan, the first platted town in southeast Hamilton County came into being in the spring of 1877 when a Narrow Gauge Railroad, the Des Moines and Minneapolis, was built north of Ames. The railroad named it Callanan for the president of the road. Callanan was only in existence for three years.

ELLSWORTH

The Toledo and Northwestern Railway got off to a quick start west from Chicago. Civil engineers were sent ahead to lay out the track and to plot a town every 7 miles. Coming from the east Dr. Ellsworth put a dot on the map where he wanted another town (Ellsworth). Going on west from what is now Ellsworth, he discovered there was a railroad junction (Jewell Junction) just three miles away. He questioned the location of Ellsworth and put his name with a question mark on the map where the future Ellsworth is located. The executives in Chicago thought he wanted a town there and meant the town should be named Ellsworth, thus the town was named.

Residents and businesses from Lakin's Grove and Callanan moved to the towns of Jewell and Ellsworth. The Town of Ellsworth was incorporated in 1893. By 1905 the population was 418.

The early pioneers chose the land in and around Ellsworth for its railroad, groves of timber, the soil, as well as a flowing stream and a good prairie nearby.

Early Businesses of Ellsworth: Peterson Drug Store, John Peterson, proprietor
Blacksmith Shop, Peter Ryberg
Horse Shoeing, L. R. Bjelde
General Department Store, Swain G. Johnson
Millinery Shop, Marie Vikingstad
Holt, Williams and Peterson Grocery & General Merchandise
Peter Holt, Lew Williams, George Peterson, proprietors
Peterson Hardware Store, Orvie Peterson proprietor
E. E. Anderson Hardware, Emery E. Anderson proprietor
The Busy Bee Restaurant, F. R. Dalbey, proprietor
Prescott's Meat Market, George Prescott
Bergeson Furniture Store, George Bergeson
The Livery Barn
The Ellsworth Creamery

Older homes still standing: 1221 Delphi, built in 1900

1425 Delphi, moved to Ellsworth from Callanan in 1882

1519 Delphi, built 1881

1520 Delphi, 1893 from Callanan

1625 Delphi, built 1887

1621 DeSoto, built in 1900

1623 DsSoto, built in 1900

1519 Dayton, Business moved from Callanan, made into
residence

1628 Dearborn, built in 1890

549 Hwy 175, built in 1880

546 Des Moines, built in 1900

436 Decora, built in 1900

CHURCHES

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Ellsworth was built in 1893 located on the corner of Dayton St and Des Moines Ave. The Congregational Church was founded in 1903 on the corner of Des Moines Ave and DeWitt St. In 1910, the M E and Congregational congregations united into one church and called themselves the Union Church. The M E church building was later moved southeast of town. In 1968, several churches unified with the Methodists and has been since called the United Methodist Church.

Lincoln Congregational Church, East Trinity Lutheran Church and West Trinity Lutheran Church are three churches with linked history. In 1890, West Trinity became a member of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America and located in Ellsworth, becoming Trinity Lutheran Church. Over the years the church was enlarged and redecorated, the basement being put under the building in 1920. In 1952, the cornerstone was laid for the new structure.

ELLSWORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL

After the building of homes and the church, the pioneers were eager to build a school in the community. The first public school had two parts, the front part of the schoolhouse being built during the period 1885 to 1890. The first floor room used for primary grades while the second floor had the grammar grades. The back part of the schoolhouse was built in 1900 and used by the upper grades.